

exhausting said collected gas through said cathode chamber to reduce water buildup within said cathode chamber.

26. In a fuel cell system comprising:

an anode chamber having a fuel,

a cathode chamber in fluid communication with an oxidizing agent,

a proton conducting membrane electrolyte separating said chambers, and

a valve for controlling a flow of a gas from said anode chamber into said cathode chamber,

a method for reducing the amount of water in said cathode chamber comprising:

closing said valve;

collecting an effluent gas produced by fuel oxidation in said anode chamber; and

opening said valve to exhaust the effluent gas out of the fuel cell from the anode chamber through the cathode chamber to reduce water buildup within said cathode chamber.

43. The fuel cell system according to claim 41, further comprising a mixing chamber positioned adjacent said outlet of said cathode chamber.

Please add new claims 47 and 48 as follows:

--47. The method according to claim 25, wherein the collected effluent gas is exhausted through said cathode chamber when an amount of said effluent gas produced reaches a predetermined value.--\

--48. The method according to claim 26, where the valve is opened to exhaust the effluent gas